

INFORMATION REPORT

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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SUBJECT Conscription of Koreans in Manchuria for the North Korean People's Army

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1. Most of the Korean troops that have returned from North China and Manchuria to North Korea were formerly members of the Northeast Military District of the Chinese People's Liberation Army. Some, however, were new recruits who had been drafted into the army under a conscription program which began in 1949.\*
2. At the same time as the Communist forces were demobilizing some Koreans in China, they were also conscripting other Koreans for service in North Korea. In January 1949, the North Korean authorities and KAO Kang (高崗) of the Northeast People's Government made an agreement that all Koreans over the age of eighteen and residing in Manchuria were to be subject to conscription for the North Korean army.
3. In 1949, staff members of the Rear Services Department of the North Korean People's Army (PA) general headquarters were sent to handle the conscription of Koreans in that part of Manchuria which was formerly the Chientao, Tunghua, and Antung Provinces. During preliminary training in their home Manchurian districts, the conscripts used former Japanese army equipment. They were later enrolled in the PA. These newly trained conscripts went first to the Second Army Division headquarters at Nanam (129-41, 41-42) for approximately a month's indoctrination and training and, thereafter, were assigned to PA units throughout North Korea. Since most of these men were illiterate, they were assigned only to infantry and cavalry units and were not assigned to the navy or air forces. Immediately upon assignment to a regular station in North Korea, they exchanged their Chinese Communist and old Japanese army uniforms for PA uniforms.

\* ~~Comment~~. This phase of operations has not been previously discussed in accounts of agreements between Chinese Communist and North Korean officials for the return of Koreans to their own country. For an account of return agreements,

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